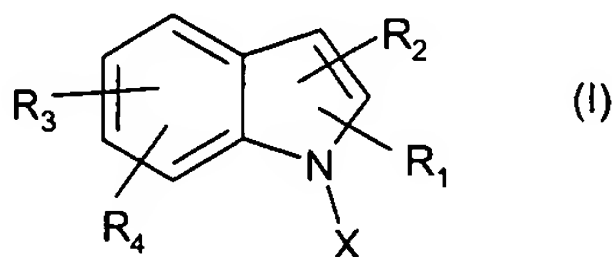


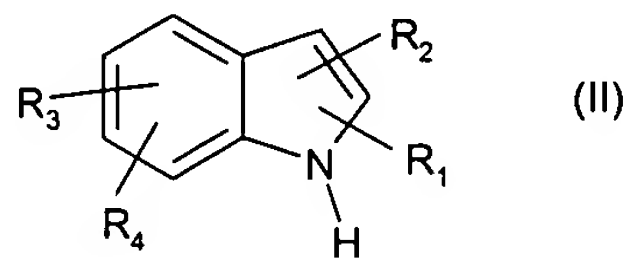
## Amendments to the Claims

***This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.***

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for the preparation of indole derivatives of the formula



wherein X is methyl or benzyl; and ~~R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>2</sub>, R<sub>3</sub> and R<sub>4</sub>~~ R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub> are independently hydrogen, ~~halogen, cyano, nitro, hydroxy,~~ or optionally substituted alkyl, alkoxy, ~~aralkoxy, carboxy, alkoxycarbonyl, aryl or heteroaryl;~~ or ~~R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub> combined together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form a fused 6-membered aromatic ring~~ R<sub>3</sub> is halogen and R<sub>4</sub> is hydrogen, halogen, cyano, nitro, hydroxyl, optionally substituted alkyl, alkoxy, aralkoxy, carboxy, alkoxycarbonyl, aryl, or heteroaryl; which method comprises reacting indoles of the formula



wherein R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>2</sub>, R<sub>3</sub> and R<sub>4</sub> have meanings as defined for formula I;  
with dimethyl carbonate when X is methyl; ~~or~~  
~~with dibenzyl carbonate when X is benzyl;~~

in the presence of a catalytic amount of ~~a base~~ 1,4-diazabicyclo[2.2.2]octane at an ambient temperature.

Claim 2 (cancelled without prejudice)

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method according to claim 2, wherein the molar ratio of 1,4-diazabicyclo[2.2.2]octane to the compound of formula II initially present in the reaction mixture ranges from 0.01:1 to 0.5:1.

Claim 4 (cancelled without prejudice)

Claim 5 (currently amended): The method according to claim ~~[[4]]~~ 3, wherein the molar ratio of the base to the compound of formula II initially present in the reaction mixture ranges from 0.05:1 to 0.15:1.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The method according to claim ~~[[4]]~~ 3, wherein the ambient temperature ranges from 80°C to 100°C.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method according to claim [[4]] 3, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of an organic solvent.

Claim 8 (original): The method according to claim 7, wherein the organic solvent is selected from the group consisting of toluene, acetonitrile, N,N-dimethylformamide, N,N-dimethylacetamide and N-methylpyrrolidinone.

Claim 9 (original): The method according to claim 8, wherein the organic solvent is N,N-dimethyl-formamide.

Claim 10 (original): The method according to claim 9, wherein the ambient temperature ranges from 90°C to 95°C.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The method according to claim [[4]] 3, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of an ionic liquid.

Claim 12 (original): The method according to claim 11, wherein the ionic liquid is tetra-n-butylammonium chloride.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The method according to claim [[4]] 3, wherein the reaction is conducted under microwave irradiation at a frequency from 300 MHz to 30 GHz, and at a temperature ranging from 80°C to 300°C for a period of microwave irradiation time ranging from 1 second to 300 min.

Claims 14 to 23 (cancelled without prejudice)